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BRAD CARSON
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CONTACT:
Brad Luna
(202) 225-2701

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***Statement of Congressman Brad Carson
Hearing on Aviation Security and the Future of the Aviation Industry***

Washington, D.C. --

Thank you Chairman Mica and Ranking Member Lipinski for holding this hearing today to begin to examine the critical issue of security in our nation's aviation industry. The events of September 11th dealt a devastating blow to our nation's airlines. In the days since, this industry has continued to struggle with a government imposed shut down, and then the concern of the American public, rightfully so, about security and safety. These concerns have kept Americans out of the skies in the last week and possibly for weeks to come. It is my hope we are taking the first steps today to improve security at our nation's airports and create a safe environment that will restore the public's confidence in air travel.

We cannot allow terrorists to limit our ability to travel within our free country or they will have won. They will try to do this by scaring us out of the skies and in turn by decimating our aviation industry. We cannot allow this to happen.

These horrible acts of terrorism occurred in this country because these people were able to breach our current aviation security systems. The United States and the aviation industry have responded to past threats by improving and changing their procedures and equipment. These are new threats we may not have fully considered, but now we must dramatically and swiftly improve our security procedures, to make the air safe again.

Returning travelers to the air with confidence is critical to our economy. The long term impacts of decreased air travel like we have seen in the last week would be devastating to the aviation industry and so many other companies and people that depend on it. The airline restoration bill that we will likely debate on the floor today only takes a small step to reinstate the airlines to the position they were in prior to September 11th; these hearings begin the more critical, longer term work that we must do.

When Americans feel safe in the air, they will return to our nation's airports. There are a number of proposals that have been discussed in the past week to improve safety. Improving cockpit security, terrorism training, and airport security are all areas we must

address and improve upon. I know that we will have the opportunity both today as well as next week to explore various proposals and I am looking forward to this discussion.

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